



## Colorado Wildlife Federation

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **Colorado Wildlife Federation Warns Drilling for Natural Gas at Roan Plateau Threatens Fish and Wildlife Resources**

**WHEATRIDGE, CO** – The Colorado Wildlife Federation (CWF) today expressed serious concerns about the Draft Roan Plateau Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), issued by the Bureau of Land Management in November 2004.

“The Colorado Wildlife Federation has a major concern about potential impacts of concentrated drilling for natural gas on the depressed resident mule deer herd, which is currently about 33% below the Colorado Wildlife Commission’s management objectives” said Dennis Buechler, Co-Chairman of CWF’s Issues and Advocacy Committee. Drilling pads and associated roads and human activities could significantly adversely affect fawning habitat on top, migration habitat down the cliffs, and wintering habitat on the bottom. Furthermore, the wintering habitat has already been seriously impacted by ongoing gas development activities. “We also have major concerns about inadequate reclamation of disturbed areas and potential impacts on nearly pure strains of native Colorado cutthroat trout, whose limited populations are at risk, as well as rare and unique plants and animals,” Buechler added.

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CWF is pleased that Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Director Russell George has tasked various experts within the Department, including representatives from the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, to serve on a DNR team that will carefully evaluate the proposed plan for Roan Plateau and make recommendations. We hope that the State of Colorado will join CWF's and the conservation community's efforts to promote effective management and protection of the important fish and wildlife resources on and below Roan Plateau.

CWF's report summarized its position on the document as follows: "In conclusion, the Colorado Wildlife Federation believes that the current DEIS is seriously flawed and none of the alternatives in the RMPA/DEIS are acceptable for sound fish and wildlife conservation." CWF also requested that a revised DEIS be prepared and circulated for public review that contains a preferred alternative that reflects the "Roan Plateau Community Alternative", which was cooperatively developed by several citizens groups and members of the local communities. That alternative should include no drilling on top for the 20-year life of the plan and a commitment to include specific lease stipulations to protect all fish and wildlife resources, including timing limitations in all wintering habitat and no surface disturbance in the remaining good wintering habitat in Magpie Gulch.

Roan Plateau is just north of I-70 near Rifle and Parachute. CWF's full report is available at [www.coloradowildlife.org](http://www.coloradowildlife.org). BLM's website is [www.roanplateau.ene.com](http://www.roanplateau.ene.com), and comments on their document are due to them by April 11, 2005.

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